

couple of years ago was a miserable one—taking health care away from millions of Americans who are getting it because of the Affordable Care Act.

But this one is just as insidious. I don't know where women in my State would be without Planned Parenthood. My wife is one of tens of thousands—probably hundreds of thousands—of Connecticut women who got their preventative care from Planned Parenthood. She did that when she was young, didn't have a lot of income, and needed to find a primary care provider who could get her access to basic health care services. There are 2.7 million patients all across the country who receive their health care, their preventative health care, from Planned Parenthood. More than 90 percent of what Planned Parenthood does all across the country is engage in preventive health care.

In 2013, 400,000 Pap tests, 500,000 breast exams, 4.5 million STI tests and treatments, including HIV tests. In Connecticut, there are 17 Planned Parenthood centers and they serve—here is the number—64,000 patients in the State of Connecticut.

So we are going to shut down the government in order to take health care away from 64,000 women in Connecticut, all in order for a handful of people to make an ideological point that may get some additional votes within a Republican Presidential primary, despite the fact that since the 1980s the law in this country has been clear: You can't use Federal dollars for abortions.

I oppose that law because I believe abortions are part of a panoply of medical services that should be available to people in this country at their choice. Frankly, I think the government should stay out of the business of deciding what medically necessary health care choices women can make. I don't think we should be involved in that. So I don't actually support the underlying law that prevents those dollars from being used, but it is the law of the land, it has been the law of the land, and it will be the law of the land.

We are saying we are going to shut down access to 64,000 women in Connecticut because the place they are getting health care also performs a health care service that is objectionable to people who are running for President, but let us take that logic to its natural extrapolation. Let's take it to its logical end point. If you believe no one should be eligible to get health care services from any institution that has anything to do with abortions or the full array of reproductive health care services, then you can't actually stop at Planned Parenthood. You have to stop funding any hospital that has anything to do with offering a full array of health care services. You have to stop funding for health care centers that do the same.

Why wouldn't you stop sending Medicaid dollars to States such as Connecticut that have codified *Roe v.*

Wade? What is the logical end to this policy if all of a sudden an organization that spends 90-plus percent of its resources simply engaging in the good stuff of preventive health care now all of a sudden can't serve anybody because they engage in a service that is a politically hot topic in Congress, despite the fact that there is a law on the books that says they can't use any of their Federal dollars for that particular service.

Take this to its logical end, and we cut off Federal funding for not 64,000 patients in Connecticut but virtually every patient in Connecticut if any association with the provision of abortions all of a sudden denies you Federal funding. I don't concede the fact that the Hyde amendment is the law of the land, but I acknowledge that it is and it will be.

This is just Presidential Republican primary politics finding its way onto the Senate floor. What this could lead to is not the defunding of Planned Parenthood, because they will not get the votes nor the Presidential signature to defund one of the most important primary and preventive health care providers in our States—I will not do that. I will not deny health care to 64,000 Connecticut women. So all they do by creating this line in the sand, once again, is shut down the Federal Government, sucking thousands of jobs out of our economy, leading to tens of thousands of stories of individual misery, such as the woman from Bridgeport who all of a sudden awoke to find her kid couldn't go to his Head Start Program and so she had to think about quitting her new job in order to take care of her child.

I get it that threats about shutdowns make good headlines. They play to a slice of a Presidential primary electorate, but they are big headaches for real people. We are not playing with politics when we talk about shutting down the government over defunding Planned Parenthood or over repealing the Affordable Care Act. We are playing with people's lives.

So I hope this is just the issue of the week in the Republican Presidential primary. I hope when we come back in September we are not seriously talking about another government shutdown. I hope we seriously are not talking about an attack on women's health care all across this country. I hope we are not entertaining the idea that tens of thousands of women in my State are all of a sudden going to lose access to services or tens of thousands of women and men are going to lose access to programs such as Head Start, job training, and all the other things that get affected when the government shuts down.

I am sick of shutdowns. I have only been in the Congress for less than a decade, and I have been through more of them, real and threatened, than I care to remember. I am certainly not going to stand for a shutdown threatened on the basis of denying health

care to women in the State of Connecticut or anywhere else across this country.

I hope we can spend some time after this vote next week—that even my Republican friends in the Republican Presidential primary will admit is a showboat—and get down to the real business of passing a budget that respects the values and priorities of this country, that keeps our government operational, and separates, to the best we can, the business we do on the Senate floor from the business of sorting out who is going to be the next Republican nominee for President.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

100TH ANNIVERSARY OF DUCHESNE COUNTY

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, today, I pay tribute to Duchesne County—a remarkable Utah county that is celebrating its 100th birthday.

Located in northeastern Utah, Duchesne County is rich with natural resources and home to some of the State's most majestic scenery. Thousands flock to the region each year to fish its streams, which include the Strawberry, Duchesne, Lake Fork, and Yellowstone Rivers. Even more enjoy its mountains, including Utah's highest, King's Peak, which is 13,528 feet above sea level. Its vistas are breathtaking and its valleys are serene and beautiful.

The county has a meaningful history that traces its roots to Native American culture. In fact, much of present-day Duchesne County was originally part of the Uintah and Ouray Indian Reservations. In the early 1900s, other settlers began arriving in the region after Congress passed the Dawes Act. To farm and make improvements to the land, the government offered these individuals 160 acres under the Homestead Act. Today, approximately 18,000 Utahns live in Duchesne County and contribute to its quality of life.

Livestock and farming along with oil and natural gas resources continue to drive the local economy. Just like its early pioneers, Duchesne County's citizens work hard not only to support their families, but also to make their

communities and our State a wonderful place to live.

Duchesne County captures the best of small town America. Its towns are charming and its people are dedicated and patriotic. I have always enjoyed visiting the many wonderful towns in Duchesne County and getting to know its citizens.

Again, I wish to congratulate Duchesne County on the marking of its centennial. This is a noteworthy time indeed, and I want to wish the many Utahns who call this place home many more years of happiness living and working in this beautiful county.

REMEMBERING ERMA ARVILLA RUPP FRITCHEN

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize the life of Erma Arvilla Rupp Fritchen. Ms. Fritchen devoted her life to justice, notably as a Freedom Rider in the summer of 1963.

Ms. Fritchen was born and raised in Reno, NV. She strove to be the first in her family to graduate from high school, but nothing was handed to her. Erma worked to pay the rent and still managed to graduate from Reno High School in 1948. Following high school, she pursued adult education classes in psychology before moving to Fort Benning, GA, as a military wife. When she arrived in Fort Benning, she was shocked by the racial disparities in her new city.

After moving back to Nevada, Erma began attending college while also raising her two children on her own. Education and family were important to her, but she was never too busy to take a stand for the principles she believed in. When she had the opportunity to make a difference by joining a civil rights caravan headed for Washington, DC, in 1963, she jumped at the opportunity and added her voice to the Freedom Rider demonstrations that were taking place throughout the country.

Through her years of fighting for justice and equality, Ms. Fritchen proved that everyone can do their part if they work and fight hard enough. I appreciate her dedication to her five sons and contributions to making our country a better place.

RECOGNIZING NEVADA PEP

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize Nevada PEP for its more than 20 years of service to children with disabilities and their families.

Nevada PEP was founded more than two decades ago by a handful of families who wanted for their children what every parent wants for their child: the opportunity to learn, grow, and succeed in all areas of life, regardless of their ability. Since then, this organization has helped children with disabilities by increasing opportunities for home, community, and school success. Although Nevada PEP started as a small organization with meetings around a kitchen table, the organiza-

tion has now served more than 17,000 people throughout the State and has had a positive impact on many more Nevadans through its greater advocacy efforts.

The "PEP" in the organization's name has a number of meanings, including, "Parents Encouraging Parents," "Parents Educating Professionals," and "Professionals Empowering Parents." Nevada PEP truly embodies all of these meanings through the services it provides. The organization offers support groups, webinars, and other skill-building activities to help the families of children with disabilities become effective advocates for their child. Nevada PEP also works to connect families to essential community resources, including organizations and professionals in the fields of education, health care, housing, and employment. Additionally, the organization raises awareness and engages the community through events, such as the "Baldy Bash," the "Run, Walk, Roll Against Bullying," and an annual art show.

I applaud Nevada PEP for their years of dedicated service to children with disabilities and their families. Their work is truly appreciated and admired. I also commend Karen Taycher, a parent and passionate advocate, as well as founding member and the executive director of Nevada PEP, for her fine leadership throughout the past two decades. As Nevada PEP begins the next chapter, I wish them continued success for years to come.

50TH ANNIVERSARY OF MEDICARE AND MEDICAID

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, today we celebrate a true milestone in our Nation's history, and we mark this reminder that basic health insurance is not a privilege for the wealthy, but a right, for every American. On July 30, 1965, President Lyndon Johnson signed the Social Security Amendments of 1965 into law, establishing the Medicare and Medicaid programs. For 50 years, these two programs have offered health care and economic security to millions of Americans and their families.

The debate over the right to basic health insurance began in the 1940s with President Harry Truman. At a time when just one in eight seniors had health care and were earning less than \$1000 on average annually, President Truman sought to create a safety net to meet the needs of a growing population. It may be difficult for all of us in the generations of Americans born since that era to fully understand today, but before Medicaid and Medicare, when private health insurers could still discriminate against individuals based on their health, many seniors were either denied coverage entirely or priced out of health insurance. And for Americans living in poverty, health care was simply out of reach.

The Social Security Amendments of 1965 offered a path forward. Today,

Medicare and Medicaid cover a combined 110 million Americans, including seniors, persons with disabilities, and low-income Americans and their families. From cancer screenings to hospital coverage, yearly well-visits, flu vaccinations, pediatric dental care and caregiver support, Medicare and Medicaid provide access to the basic health care services that all Americans deserve. And what a dramatic and tangible difference that has made and continues to make in the lives of millions of people.

Through the Affordable Care Act, Medicare and Medicaid took a step further. States that expanded Medicaid under the law saved nearly \$2 billion in health care costs while extending coverage to many, many more Americans. Closing the coverage gap known as the "donut hole" saved seniors on Medicare \$15 billion in health care costs—a savings to seniors of \$28 million in my home State of Vermont alone. The Affordable Care Act strengthened Medicare for future generations, extending the trust fund an additional 13 years as a result of savings to the program.

It is worth remembering as well that in the early years of Medicare and Medicaid, as these programs were established and went through some growing pains, public opinion at first was tentative in supporting these major reforms. Over time, public support for and appreciation of the benefits of these programs has grown significantly. We can see some parallels in the way public opinion about the Affordable Care Act has continued to grow, as its benefits have become more widespread and more apparent in our daily lives.

As we celebrate this important anniversary, I hope we all will remember how far these programs have come and commit to keeping them strong for future generations. Strengthening Medicare and Medicaid is an economic investment in the well-being of our country, and I will fight for these programs for my children and my grandchildren.

I am proud to celebrate an anniversary marking the Federal Government's promise of providing reassurance and stability for our Nation's most vulnerable citizens. I look forward to celebrating the success of Medicare and Medicaid for generations to come.

DRIVE ACT

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I am pleased by Senate passage today of the DRIVE Act, a long-overdue, multiyear surface transportation bill to authorize and fund our Nation's highway, bridge, and transit programs. This bill would provide the certainty needed for State and local planning organizations to set transportation priorities and begin long-term investments to modernize our Nation's aging infrastructure.

This bill is also a win for the State of Arizona. Included in the DRIVE Act are critical measures, sponsored by